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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: DECEMBER 21, 2009

Summary: Fallout from the NRO verdict continues to dominate media coverage Monday morning, with wide coverage of a variety of statements by government officials portraying themselves as "political victims," and rejecting public calls for resignation. Rumored U.S. diplomatic and military activities in country continue to grab headlines. The Daily Times published an AP report that, according to senior U.S. officials, the United States will seek a separate agreement to go after the Haqqani network. The Nation front-paged a report today that "U.S. land-grabbing" has caused eight families residing in the Prime Minister's staff colony to receive evacuation notices. The same paper also published another report claiming that the government has decided to "shift U.S. trainers from Sihala Police Training College to Islamabad Police Lines Headquarters." Weekend editions of several major newspapers reported that the government has made ISI clearance mandatory for foreigners intending to visit Pakistan. In an 'exclusive story' published on Sunday, "The News," and its sister Urdu daily claimed that the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad sought registration numbers for 800 vehicles. On the same day, several papers carried a report quoting Indian wire-service, PTI, that "U.S. fighter jets were seen flying over the Mohmand Agency for almost two hours." Reports and photographs of the Jamaat-e-Islami's "go (away) America go (away)" rally in Rawalpindi also garnered media coverage. Recent terrorist attacks rounded out coverage, including the bombing of a private school near Peshawar and the torching of two NATO oil tankers in a suburb of Quetta. End Summary.

#### TOP STORIES

News Story: U.S. Fighter Jets Intrude Into Pak Airspace "The Nation" (12/21) (12/20)

"U.S. fighter jets were on Saturday seen flying over Mohmand tribal region bordering Afghanistan for almost two hours, local residents and officials said, reported Indian news agency PTI. The jets, which were flying at low altitude, intruded almost 50 kilometers into the Pakistani airspace."

News Story: U.S. Embassy Seeks Registration Numbers For 800 Vehicles "The News" (12/20)

"The United States Embassy has sought registration numbers of the federal capital for about 800 vehicles. The Foreign Office will consider the Embassy's demand at a meeting on Monday. Senior officials of intelligence agencies, the local administration, and the Interior Ministry and its subordinate organizations will attend the meeting."

News Story: Vehicle Of U.S. Embassy Stolen From Satellite Town "The

News" (12/21)

"A vehicle of the U.S. Embassy was stolen from the Satellite Town, after an employee of the Embassy, parked it in front of his house on Sunday, a police spokesman said. An official of a security agency feared that the car could be used for terrorist activities. The police have taken up the case on the report of security supervisor of the embassy and started investigation.... Richard Snelsir, spokesman of the U.S. Embassy, when contacted by 'The News' said that the Rawalpindi Police were working on the case proficiently and hopefully they would trace out the vehicle. When asked, whether, the stolen vehicle could be used in terrorist activity, the spokesman said, 'I don't think so, because, the police engaged in investigation, know every detail about the vehicle.'"

News Story: Another Victim Of U.S. 'Land Grabbing' "The Nation" (12/21)

"Prime Minister's Staff Colony that falls in the limits of Diplomatic Enclave is the latest piece of land that fell prey to the U.S. land grabbing, 'The Nation' has learnt reliably. According to well-informed sources in PM Secretariat, the concerned quarters, in a latest move, have issued evacuation notices to some eight families of the staffers of the PM Secretariat residing in PM Staff Colony. They have been asked to leave their flats immediately, while construction of new flats and renovation of existing houses are in progress.... 'Now it is clear that after evacuation of PM Staff Colony, the land would be given to the U.S. Embassy where the operatives of a U.S. security firm would be housed," the sources disclosed."

News Story: Islamabad Police Lines New Home Of U.S. 'Trainers' "The Nation" (12/21)

"Succumbing to pressure of media and lawyers' fraternity, who protested twice in front of Police Training College, Sihala, and raised questions about the presence of Americans there, the Government has decided to shift Americans to Islamabad Police Line Headquarters. Reliable sources informed 'The Nation' on Sunday that the quarters concerned have asked Islamabad police to vacate two blocks of Police Line Headquarters for American who would be shifted there from Sihala."

#### TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Reality Bites As U.S. Pushes Pakistan To Finish Off Terrorists "Daily Times" (12/21)

"Pakistan will not go as far as Washington wants, and there's nothing the U.S. can do about it: that's the sobering reality as the U.S. tries to persuade the hesitant government to finish off the fight against terrorists. Expand the current assault against the Taliban? The government has made clear that will happen only on its own terms. U.S. officials acknowledge that so far they have not won the argument that militants who target America are enemies of Pakistan too. The citizens are deeply suspicious of America's power and motives, making it difficult for the leaders to accede to Washington's pressure in public, lest they look like U.S. puppets. U.S. officials say while Pakistani officials cooperate more in private, there are definite limits. The U.S. wanted Pakistan to move forces deeper into the tribal belt before winter. It did not happen, and might not at all."

News Story: NATO Chief Calls For Enhanced Ties With Islamabad "Dawn" (12/21)

"NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said in Brussels that the military alliance's new strategy to uproot terrorism from the Pak-Afghan region is based on increased cooperation with Islamabad. Rasmussen said the U.S.-led coalition must emerge victorious in its battle with the Taliban in Afghanistan, otherwise the militant outfit would destabilize not only Afghanistan, but Pakistan as well."

News Story: Two NATO Oil Tankers Set Ablaze "Dawn" (12/21)

"Two oil tankers carrying fuel for NATO forces in southern Afghanistan were burnt down by armed men near the western bypass

(Quetta) on Sunday. It was the second case of torching of NATO tankers in Balochistan in the last four days."

News Story: Pakistan Urged To Gain Control Of FATA With U.S. Help  
"Dawn" (12/21)

"By partnering with the United States, Pakistan can gain sovereignty over all its tribal territory for the first time in its history, The Washington Post has suggested. Columnist David Ignatius, who is currently in Pakistan, wrote that he had discussed the idea with senior Pakistani leaders. Such an arrangement, he argued, would 'finally complete the task of building (the Pakistani) nation.' 'This is a classic example of what strategists call a 'positive sum' game where, by working together, Washington and Islamabad could gain benefits that they would not achieve alone,' he wrote."

News Story: 'Go America Go' Rally: JI Warns Of Long March On Islamabad  
"Dawn," "The News" (12/21)

"The Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) on Sunday threatened to give call for a long march on Islamabad in case the government created obstacles in implementation of the Supreme Court verdict on National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO). Speaking at a 'Go America Go' rally held in the city despite imposition of Section 144, JI Chief Syed Munawar Hassan said the NRO beneficiaries should have honored the verdict of the apex court by tendering resignations."

News Story: ISI Clearance Must For Foreigners Entering Pakistan  
"Daily Time" (12/19)

"The government has declared that security clearance by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is a prerequisite for all foreigners entering Pakistan, a private TV channel reported on Friday. According to sources, the decision was made due to the prevailing law and order situation in the country."

News Story: Blast Damages School In Peshawar "Daily Time" (12/21)

"A private school building was damaged in a blast in Mathra Police Station limits, police said on Sunday."

News Story: U.S. Condemns Terrorist Attack in Timargarah "The News," "Jang," "Jinnah" (12/19)

"The U.S. Embassy in Pakistan strongly condemned the terrorist bombing on Friday targeting people in prayer near Timargarah police headquarters, killing and injuring many innocent people."

#### POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: Ex-U.S. Envoy Backs Zardari on Kashmir "The Nation" (12/21)

"A former American ambassador to Pakistan has endorsed President Asif Ali Zardari's view that there would be no lasting peace in South Asia unless the Indo-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir was resolved, but disagreed with his suggestion that U.S. had exploited Islamabad in the aftermath of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. 'This (the Kashmir issue) seems now to be on the back burner, but it should not be forgotten,' wrote Ronald Spiers who served as U.S. envoy in the early 1980's when Washington began supplying weapons to anti-Soviet Afghan Mujahideen with the help of former president Zia-ul-Haq's military regime."

News Story: Major Parties Shun Call For Mid-Term Polls "Dawn" (12/21)

"Although the PPP appears to have adopted a posture of confrontation in the wake of Supreme Court's verdict against the NRO, a demand by Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaaf chairman Imran Khan for mid-term elections has not gained any support from major opposition parties. Almost all important parties which contested the February 2008 polls as well as those which boycotted them are of the view that mid-term polls are not a solution to the political crisis now faced by the country."

News Story: Balochistan Package Jeopardized "The Nation" (12/21)

"Imminent threats of American drone attacks inside Balochistan and

adjacent tribal belt are feared to jeopardize the Government's endeavors to appease the estranged Baloch through the recently announced empowerment package for the most backward province.... The Government at the same time is not at all in a position to guarantee against the drone attacks, the sources observed."

News Story: U.S. Develops 'Judicial Solidarity' With Pakistan; American Judges Complete Four Day Exchange "The News," "Business Recorder," "Jang," "Nawa-i-Waqt," "Express," "Pakistan," "Khabrain," "Jinnah," "Aaj Kal," "Al Akhbar" (12/19)

"The Honorable Morrison C. England Jr., U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of California, and the Honorable Janet Bond Arterton, U.S. District Judge for Connecticut, concluded the first official visit of American judges to Pakistan on Friday. During the four-day exchange, established by the U.S. Judicial Conference, the federal judges met with district and session court judges from across Pakistan to examine ways to improve case management efficiency."

#### ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: Terror Financing Dominates Pak-Afghan Transit Trade Talks "The Nation" (12/21)

"The U.S.-monitored ongoing Pakistan-Afghanistan parleys aimed at a new transit trade agreement hit snags after Islamabad's proposal of attaching tough security related strings. According to sources, the U.S.-sponsored efforts were in trembles as Pakistan wants assurances that the proposed Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) would not be misused for terror financing, drug trafficking and arms trade. The three-day fourth round of talks at the technical-level would conclude today (Monday). Senior Joint Secretary Commerce, Shahid Bashir, is heading Pakistani team while Adib Farhadi, Deputy Minister for Commerce and Industries, is leading the Afghan side."

News Story: Bureaucracy Stalls \$800m Hydel Project "Dawn" (12/21)

"Amid a controversy over expensive rental power projects, a \$800 million foreign investment for cheap hydroelectric power generation is unlikely to materialize mainly because of bureaucratic wrangling, despite full support extended by federal and Azad Kashmir governments. This comes at a time when the Federal Government is finding it difficult to lure foreign investment to meet growing energy shortfalls and is approaching world capitals to secure supplies of oil, natural gas and liquefied gas for power generation at much higher prices, involving massive outflow of foreign exchange. Background interviews and official documents available with 'Dawn' suggest that after pursuing the 500-MW Mahl power project at home and abroad for almost four years now, the process 'has been stopped altogether.'"

News Story: U.S. Blamed For Copenhagen Failure "The News" (12/21)

"ActionAid International Policy Director Anne Jellema has said that U.S. President Barack Obama has to shoulder most of the blame for the failure of the UN Climate Change Conference in achieving a meaningful global deal, says a press release issued in Islamabad Sunday."

News Story: Call For Building On Copenhagen Momentum "Dawn" (12/21)

"World leaders insisted on Sunday that the climate deal clinched in desperation at the UN summit was the best that could have been done as they returned home to a lashing from critics. U.S. President Barack Obama acknowledged that all of the world's polluters would quickly have to do more, but German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the critics would only hold up the battle against rising temperatures that threaten devastating floods, storms and drought. Mr. Obama returned to the White House and said 'extremely difficult and complex negotiations' had been needed in Copenhagen."

#### MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: Black Acts Of Blackwater "The Nation" (12/20)

"A significant section of Western media believes that the existence of notorious Blackwater is strongly interlinked to the pursuit of those hegemonic and expansionist designs that have emanated from religious prejudice and ethnic bias. The information available at some renowned Western websites, magazines and newspapers is evident enough to believe the underlying reality that Blackwater, now known as Xe Worldwide, is not just a security company but an organized lethal network that has been entrusted, by its framers, with the task to spread crusade ideology and eliminate Muslims from all over the world. A renowned website quotes a former Blackwater employee, who among the other employees of the same company had sworn affidavits against their employer containing the accusations of weapon smugglings, slaughters and killings of all those former employees of the company who cooperated with U.S. federal investigators against Blackwater to expose numerous atrocities and killings that it carried out over the years."

News Story: Afghan President Says New Cabinet To Be Accountable "The News" (12/21)

"Afghan President Hamid Karzai promised on Sunday his new Cabinet would be held to account following mounting criticism over graft in his government. Karzai's nominations for 23 ministerial positions were presented to Parliament for approval on Saturday."

News Story: U.S.-Led Operation In Helmand To Fizzle Out, Claim Taliban "The News" (12/21)

"Taliban on Sunday described the Helmand governor's statement to extend the ongoing military operation to Taliban-controlled areas as a propaganda tactics. Talking to Afghan Islamic Press (AIP), a spokesman for Taliban Qari Muhammad Yusuf Ahmadi said that the operation launched by foreign and Afghan forces in Helmand province would not yield any result."

News Story: U.S. Hails Return Of Pakistani Exchange Students & Teachers "Ausaf" (12/19)

"U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Gerald Feierstein welcomed home 57 students and 27 teachers from the ED-Links training and cultural exchange program in the United States on Friday, saying he hopes such 'people to people' exchanges will promote better understanding between America and Pakistan."

#### EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Festering Tensions, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/21)

"Doubtless one of the bones of contention is the American complaint that we are 'dragging our feet' (another version of the 'not doing enough' mantra) in the matter of issuing new visas to U.S. nationals or renewing the visas of those who have been working here and wish to return. We are told that the continued delays in the issuing of visas may begin to impact upon the payment of tranches of aid we are due to receive - as blatant a piece of arm-twisting as we have seen for some time. Yet why should we not be careful - indeed slow - to issue visas to Americans some of whom may not be as advertised on the outside of the packet? You may find this irritating, Uncle Sam - but it is no less irritating for us to discover armed Americans in local dress travelling our roads. Just ask yourself ... wouldn't you be wary? The 'festering' looks chronic and the healing process slow."

Editorial: Lawyers' Movement Against U.S. Interference, an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (12/21)

"The growing U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan is not only an intrusion on our sovereignty, but also the real cause of the fast-deteriorating law and order situation in the country. We think that the Saturday's protest rally staged by the lawyers fraternity in Rawalpindi, against the presence of American trainers at Sihala Police Training College, demonstrated the resentment of the Pakistani masses over the U.S. activities."

Editorial: U.S. Lack of Interest in Real Issues Confronting World,

an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (12/21)

"Many commentators are of the view that the great powers, particularly the U.S., were not interested in making the Copenhagen Conference a success. We think that Washington takes more interest in fighting war than solving the real issues facing the mankind. In fact, most of the world's problems will be solved, if the U.S. agrees to spend only 1/3 of military budget for eliminating poverty and coping with the environmental challenges. But it would never do so."

Editorial: Peshawar Declaration of Political Parties, an editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (12/21)

"In a joint declaration, several progressive political parties and the representatives of the civil society have demanded the government to change its Afghan policy, and give up the idea of using Afghanistan as the strategic depth for Pakistan (in case of any Indian strike). They said that several reports suggested that our ruling elite is still pursuing this strategy. We think that broad-based alliance of such like-minded forces is of vital importance to put an end to the ambiguity and uncertainty in our national policies."

Editorial: The Deal That Wasn't, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/21)

"Yes, a select group of countries came up with an 'accord' that is not obligatory and was simply 'noted' by other delegates in a final resolution. Indeed, it is questionable whether the so-called deal even enjoys UN endorsement. Warming caps have been agreed upon but how these are to be achieved remains a mystery.... The unkindest cut for many developing countries is that they will be hardest hit by climate change even though their emission levels are negligible on the global scale."

Editorial: Copenhagen Summit, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/21)

"Even those who would have liked Copenhagen to be a success now see it as merely preparation for the next moot, Conference of the Parties 16 (COP16) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to be held in Mexico next year. It is hoped to achieve more at this meeting, and tie down the worst carbon emitters to more than just giving money, as at Copenhagen. The Summit tends to show that nations will go on bringing state interests to the table, and it is fear for jobs and the standard of living they have, that is driving the attitudes of the worst polluters, as well as those who have embarked on the profligate Western development model."

Editorial: Copenhagen's Non-Deal, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (12/21)

"The Copenhagen accord reached between the U.S., China, India, Brazil and South Africa provides for a target to limit global temperatures rising by no more than 2 degrees Celsius. However, it is not clear how this goal will be achieved. The accord also promises to deliver \$ 30 billion over the next three years to help developing countries adapt to climate change.... It is an epochal task with huge costs. If the developed countries do not take up the major burden of the cost, it would obviate the entire purpose of the climate summit. So far it seems as if the developed world is not too serious in turning this non-deal into a real deal. To avert a global disaster, the world must act urgently before it is too late."

Editorial: A Setback To Environment, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (12/21)

"The conference merely recognized the need to limit global temperatures to no more than 2C above "pre-industrial levels" and set a goal for developed countries to raise \$100 billion a year for poorer nations by 2020. Only time could tell how the developed countries would honor these commitments. Executive Director of Friends of the Earth Andy Atkins expressed his frustration by saying this agreement won't stop a two degree rise in temperature and, as

it stands, condemns millions of the world's poorest people to hunger, suffering and loss of life as climate change accelerates. Developing countries expressed outrage that threats to the very existence of some nations were ignored."

Editorial: "Admiral Mullen's Suggestion To Resolve The Kashmir Issue, an editorial note in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (circ. 25, 000) (12/21)

"U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen has said that resolving the Kashmir issue has become inevitable for peace and stability in South Asia hence President Obama should convince India and Pakistan to work towards a compromise. His argument in this regard was that America's new Afghan policy would not have positive results until tension on Pakistan's eastern border is removed and this tension cannot be removed until the Kashmir issue is resolved.... At a critical time such as this, it is very significant that a powerful U.S. official has realized the importance of resolving the Kashmir issue. Pakistan should also request President Obama to help resolve this festering issue using his power and wisdom."

Editorial: Kashmir Issue: Admiral Mullen's Suggestion, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (12/21)

"Talking with journalists in the U.S. after visiting Pakistan, Admiral Mike Mullen has said that resolving Kashmir issue has become inevitable for stability in South Asia.... The Indian leadership should take the initiative in resuming bilateral talks and should come to the negotiating table with the objective in mind that the talks should be a source of ending the conflict, not wasting time."

Editorial: Kashmir Is The Real Issue, an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (12/21)

"Actually, India is such a big market that no one wants to displease it. The U.S. President also went quiet on his promise [on Kashmir] after taking a look at this market. Now, however, the U.S. understands the fact that it is only due to the Kashmir issue that Pakistan cannot fight the war on terror wholeheartedly. The Indian government must realize that issues can only be resolved through talks. The sooner Indian leadership realizes this better."

Editorial: Iran's Nuclear Issue, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/21)

"By now the U.S. should have grasped the point that Iran would not, under any circumstances, close down its nuclear enrichment facilities so that it could allay the fear, which it maintains is baseless, about its clandestine attempt to acquire nuclear weapons for itself. The various proposals envisaging the swap of Iran's uranium enriched at low level for fuel to run nuclear power stations are on the table. And its Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki has reiterated his President's remark that Tehran is ready to examine the fuel swap offer. There is, therefore, no justification for continuing the language of threats and sanctions."

Opinion: Demonizing America, an op-ed by Ahmad Faruqui in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/21)

"With every passing week, Pakistan continues to inch towards the brink. Given the frequency of the Muslim-on-Muslim attacks that are now being mounted, it is moot whether Pakistan is a failing state or a failed state. Neither prognosis is good. The U.S. is not perfect. It has made its share of mistakes, domestically and internationally. A common charge levied by the anti-Americanistas is that the U.S. acts in its own interests. That should be cause for celebration and not denigration. If only Pakistan would do the same. Instead of demonizing America, it should turn on its own demons."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson